

To with him wrastle with affection,
And neuer to let Beatrice know of it.

Vrsula. Why did you so, doth not the Gentleman
Deserue as full as fortunate a bed,
As euer Beatrice shall couch vpon?

Hero. O God of loue! I know he doth deserue,
As much as may be yeelded to a man:
But Nature neuer fram'd a womans heart,
Of powder stufte then that of Beatrice:
Disdaine and Scorne ride sparkling in her eyes,
Mis-prizing what they looke on, and her wit
Values it selfe so highly, that to her
All matter else seemes weak: she cannot loue,
Nor take no shape nor proiect of affection,
Shee is so selfe indeared.

Vrsula. Sure I thinke so,
And therefore certainly it were not good
She knew his loue, lest she make sport at it.

Hero. Why you speake truth, I neuer yet saw man,
How wise, how noble, yong, how rarely teatur'd.
But she would spell him backward: if faire fac'd,
She would sweare the gentleman should be her sister:
If blacke, why Nature drawing of an anticke,
Made a foule blot: if tall, a launce ill headed:
If low, an agot very vildie cur:
If speaking, why a vane blowne with all windes:
If silent, why a blocke moued with none.
So turnes she euery man the wrong side out,
And neuer giues to Truth and Vertue, that
Which simplenesse and merit purchaseth.

Vrsula. Sure, sure, such carping is not commendable.
Hero. No, not to be so odde, and from all fashions,
As Beatrice is, cannot be commendable,

But who dare tell her so? if I should speake,
She would mocke me into ayre, O she would laugh me
Out of my selfe, presse me to death with wit,
Therefore let Benedicke like couered fire,
Consume away in sighes, waste inwardly:
It were a better death, to die with mockes,
Which is as bad as die with tickling.

Vrsula. Yet tell her of it, heare what shee will say.

Hero. No, rather I will goe to Benedicke,
And counsaile him to fight against his passion,
And truly Ile deuise some honest slanders,
To staine my cosin with, one doth not know,
How much an ill word may impositon liking.

Vrsula. O doe not doe your cosin such a wrong,
She cannot be so much without true iudgement,
Hauing so swift and excellent a wit
As she is proude to haue, as to refuse
So rare a Gentleman as signior Benedicke.

Hero. He is the onely man of Italy,
Alwaies excepted, my deare Claudio.

Vrsula. I pray you be not angry with me, Madame,
Speaking my fancy: Signior Benedicke,
For shape, for bearing argument and valour,
Goes for most in report through Italy.

Hero. Indeed he hath an excellent good name.

Vrsula. His excellence did earne it ere he had it:
When are you married Madame?

Hero. Why euerie day to morrow, come goe in,
Ile shew thee some attires, and haue thy counsell,
Which is the best to furnish me to morrow.

Vrsula. Shee's tane I warrant you,
We haue caught her Madame?

Hero. If it proue so, then louing goes by haps,

Some Cupid kills with arrowes, some with traps. *Exit.*

Beat. What fire is in mine eares? can this be true?
Stand I condemn'd for pride and scorne so much?
Contempt, farewell, and maiden pride, adew,
No glory liues behinde the backe of such.
And Benedicke, loue on, I will requite thee,
Taming my wilde heart to thy louing hand:
If thou dost loue, my kindenesse shall incite thee
To binde our loues vp in a holy band.
For others say thou dost deserue, and I
Beleuee it better then reportingly. *Exit.*

Enter Prince, Claudio, Benedicke, and Leonato.
Prince. I doe but stay till your marriage be consum-
mate, and then go I toward Arragon.

Claudio. Ile bring you thither my Lord, if you'l vouch-
safe me.

Prince. Nay, that would be as great a foyle in the new
glosse of your marriage, as to shew a childe his new coat
and forbid him to weare it. I will onely bee bold with
Benedicke for his companie, for from the crowne of his
head, to the sole of his foot, he is all mirth, he hath twice
or thrice cut Cupids bow-string, and the little hang-man
dare not shoot at him, he hath a heart as found as a bell,
and his tongue is the clapper, for what his heart thinks,
his tongue speakes.

Benedicke. Gallants, I am not as I haue bin.

Leonato. So say I, methinks you are fadder.

Claudio. I hope he be in loue.

Prince. Hang him truant, there's no true drop of bloud
in him to be truly toucht with loue, if he be sad, he wants
money.

Benedicke. I haue the tooth-ach.

Prince. Draw it.

Benedicke. Hang it.

Claudio. You must hang it first, and draw it afterwards.

Prince. What? sigh for the tooth-ach.

Leonato. Where is but a humour or a worne.

Benedicke. Well, euery one cannot master a griefe, but hee
that has it.

Claudio. Yet say I, he is in loue.

Prince. There is no appearance of fancie in him, vnlesse
it be a fancy that he hath to strange disguises, as to bee a
Dutchman to day, a Frenchman to morrow: vnlesse hee
haue a fancy to this foolery, as it appeares hee hath, hee
is no foole for fancy, as you would haue it to appeare
he is.

Claudio. If he be not in loue vwith some vvoman, there
is no beleueing old signes, a brushes his hat a mornings,
What should that bode?

Prince. Hath any man seene him at the Barbers?

Claudio. No, but the Barbers man hath beene seene with
him, and the olde ornament of his cheekes hath alreadie
stufst tennis balls.

Leonato. Indeed he lookes yonger than hee did, by the
losse of a beard.

Prince. Nay a rubs himselfe vwith Ciuit, can you smell
him out by that?

Claudio. That's as much as to say, the sweet youth's in
loue.

Prince. The greatest note of it is his melancholy.

Claudio. And vvhen vvass he vvont to vvash his face?

Prince. Yea, or to paint himselfe? for the which I heare
vvhat they say of him.

Claudio. Nay, but his iesting spirit, vvwhich is now crept
into a lute-string, and now gouern'd by stops.

Prince.

Prince. Indeed that tels a heavy tale for him: conclude,
he is in loue.

Claudio. Nay, but I know who loues him.

Prince. That would I know too, I warrant one that
knowes him not.

Claudio. Yes, and his ill conditions, and in despight of all,
dies for him.

Prince. Shee shall be buried with her face vpwards.

Benedicke. Yet is this no charme for the tooth-ake, old sig-
nior, walke aside with mee, I haue studied eight or nine
wife words to speake to you, which these hobby-horses
must not heare.

Prince. For my life to breake with him about Beatrice.

Claudio. 'Tis euen so, *Hero* and *Margaret* haue by this
played their parts with Beatrice, and then the two Beares
will not bite one another when they meete.

Enter John the Bastard.

Bast. My Lord and brother, God saue you.

Prince. Good den brother.

Bast. If your leisure seru'd, I would speake with you.

Prince. In priuate?

Bast. If it please you, yet Count Claudio may heare,
for what I would speake of, concerns him.

Prince. What's the matter?

Bast. Meanes your Lordship to be married to mor-
row?

Prince. You know he does.

Bast. I know not that when he knowes what I know.

Claudio. If there be any impediment, I pray you disco-
uer it.

Bast. You may thinke I loue you not, let that appeare
hereafter, and ayme better at me by that I now will ma-
nifest, for my brother (I thinke, he holds you well, and in
dearenesse of heart) hath hope to effect your ensuing
marriage: surely sute ill spent, and labour ill bestowed.

Prince. Why, what's the matter?

Bastard. I came hither to tell you, and circumstances
shortned, (for she hath beene too long a talking of) the
Lady is disloyall.

Claudio. Who *Hero*?

Bast. Euen shee, *Leonatoes Hero*, your *Hero*, euery
mans *Hero*.

Claudio. Disloyall?

Bast. The word is too good to paint out her wicked-
nesse, I could say she were worse, thinke you of a worse
title, and I will fit her to it: wonder not till further war-
rant: goe but with mee to night, you shal see her cham-
ber window entred, euen the night before her wedding
day, if you loue her, then to morrow wed her: But it
would better fit your honour to change your minde.

Claudio. May this be so?

Prince. I will not thinke it.

Bast. If you dare not trust that you see, confesse not
that you know: if you will follow mee, I will shew you
enough, and when you haue seene more, & heard more,
proceed accordingly.

Claudio. If I see any thing to night, why I should not
marry her to morrow in the congregation, where I shold
wedde, there will I shame her.

Prince. And as I wooed for thee to obtaine her, I will
ioyne with thee to disgrace her.

Bast. I will disparage her no farther, till you are my
witnesses, beare it coldly but till night, and let the issue
shew it selfe.

Prince. O day vntowardly turned!

Claudio. O mischief strange! thwarting!

Bastard. O plague right well preuented! so will you
say, when you haue seene the sequele. *Exit.*

Enter Dogberry and his compartner with the watch.

Dog. Are you good men and true?

Verg. Yea, or else it were pittie but they should suffer
saluation body and soule.

Dog. Nay, that were a punishment too good for
them, if they should haue any allegiance in them, being
chosen for the Princes watch.

Verges. Well, giue them their charge, neighbour
Dogberry.

Dog. First, who thinke you the most defartlesse man
to be Constable?

Watch. 1. Hugh Ote-cake sir, or George Sea-coale, for
they can write and reade.

Dog. Come hither neighbour Sea-coale, God hath
blest you with a good name: to be a wel-fauoured man,
is the gift of Fortune, but to write and reade, comes by
Nature.

Watch. 2. Both which Master Constable

Dog. You haue: I knew it would be your answer:
well, for your fauour sir, why giue God thanks, & make
no boast of it, and for your writing and reading, let that
appeare when there is no need of such vanity, you are
thought heere to be the most senslesse and fit man for the
Constable of the watch: therefore beare you the lan-
thorne: this is your charge: You shall comprehend all
vagrom men, you are to bid any man stand in the Prin-
ces name.

Watch. 2. How if a will not stand?

Dog. Why then take no note of him, but let him go,
and presently call the rest of the Watch together, and
thanke God you are ridde of a knaue.

Verges. If he will not stand when he is bidden, hee is
none of the Princes subiects.

Dog. True, and they are to meddle with none but
the Princes subiects: you shall also make no noise in the
streetes: for, for the Watch to babble and talke, is most
tollerable, and not to be indured.

Watch. We will rather sleepe than talke, wee know
what belongs to a Watch.

Dog. Why you speake like an ancient and most quiet
watchman, for I cannot see how sleeping should offend:
only haue a care that your bills be not stolne: well, you
are to call at all the Alehouses, and bid them that are
drunke get them to bed.

Watch. How if they will not?

Dog. Why then let them alone till they are sober, if
they make you not then the better answer, you may say,
they are not the men you tooke them for.

Watch. Well sir.

Dog. If you meet a theefe, you may suspect him, by
vertue of your office, to be no true man: and for such
kinde of men, the lesse you meddle or make with them,
why the more is for your honesty.

Watch. If wee know him to be a theefe, shall wee not
lay hands on him.

Dog. Truly by your office you may, but I thinke they
that touch pitch will be defil'd: the most peaceable way
for you, if you doe take a theefe, is, to let him shew him-
selfe what he is, and steale out of your company.

Verg. You haue bin alwaies call'd a merciful mā partner.

Dog. Truly I would not hang a dog by my will, much
more a man who hath anie honestie in him.

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Verges.